



Lake County

JSEC Insider

REMINDER!!

January 1, 2008
Montana Minimum Wage
increases to \$6.25

Initiative 151 requires an adjustment to the minimum wage to be calculated no later than September 30 of each year based upon any increase in the U.S. City Average Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for All Items (CPI) from August of the preceding year to August of the year in which the calculation is made. This amount is to be rounded to the nearest five cents. The current 2007 minimum wage rate is \$6.15. Based on an increase in the CPI of 1.97% from August, 2006 to August, 2007, the calculation used for determining the minimum wage rate for 2008 is as follows:

$\$6.15 \times .0197 = \0.1211 ,
rounded to \$0.10

The initiative also states the minimum wage to be the greater of the federal or current state minimum wage. **Effective July 24, 2008, the minimum wage will increase to \$6.55 per hour**, based on the federal minimum wage increase. Please visit our web page www.employlakecounty.com under "What's New" for the new minimum wage poster.

I-9 Form

The USCIS released a revised Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9), which is now available for use. It is a federal requirement that US employers complete an I-9 form for all employees within the first three days of employment, and retain the form for one year after termination of employment or three years, whichever is longer. www.formi9.com or www.employlakecounty.com

MT's Population Growth Continues...but who are we?

Montana's population totaled 957,861 on July 1, 2007, up 11,066 from one year earlier, according to estimates released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. Montana's rank remains 44th.

This release also includes components of change otherwise known as births and deaths (natural increase) and migration, both internal and international. To access the latest data including a Montana highlight with a regional map showing how Montana compares with our neighboring states, detailed Excel files with rankings and population density maps, visit CEIC's state estimates web page at <http://ceic.mt.gov/EstimatesStatePop.asp>

The Census Bureau develops state population estimates by measuring the population change since the most recent census. It uses births, deaths, administrative records and survey data to develop estimates of migration.

Interested in Tax Savings for the New Year?

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is designed to assist individuals facing barriers move into gainful employment. If you hire an individual from a WOTC Target group, your company may be eligible for up to \$9,000 in federal tax credits. Target groups include AFDC/TANF recipients, veterans, ex-felons, high risk, vocational rehabilitation, summer youth, food stamp recipients, SSI recipients, SSDI ticket to work, and long term family assistance recipients. The most common positions of WOTC applicants are in the health care, retail, carpentry, manufacturing, management, clerical, and housekeeping fields. For more information, phone (406)444-9046, (800)726-0615 or email Christy Robbins at crobbins@mt.gov.

Policy Manuals

As we begin a New Year, now is a good time to review and update your policy manuals. In a recent MT Human Rights Bureau case, Baldwin v. T'N T Pizza, Inc., an up-to-date and clear policy regarding sexual harassment and complaint procedures protected the company from an unfavorable determination. "What's in your Policy?" If you're interested in learning more about handbooks and policy manuals, please call 883-7880 or drop by our office for available resources. Also, be sure to seek legal advice before embarking on and implementation of your handbook or policy manual.



Mission Valley One Stop Workforce Center
Lake County Job Service
PO Box 970
417 B Main Street
Polson, MT 59860

Worker's Compensation Quiz

1. If an employer wants to save money he can have his employees sign away their rights to worker's compensation.
2. An injured worker has choice of first treating physician.
3. An injured worker has 36 months to file a claim.
4. An injured worker can collect Unemployment Benefits and Worker's Compensation at the same time.
5. The treating physician is the one who decides when it is time to go back to work.

Answers:

1. **False**, Worker's Compensation cannot be signed away, period.
2. **True**, but the insurer has the right to deny unauthorized medical referrals.
3. **False**, an injured worker has only 12 months to file a claim.
4. **False**, in order to be eligible for Unemployment Benefits you must be able to work and available for work. If you are injured you are unable to work and therefore ineligible.
5. **True**, the employer or employee cannot decide the time to go back to work.



From The Book of Questions: Business, Politics, and Ethics by Gregory Stock, Ph.D.

#150

If you were in charge of filling a very desirable job at a medium-size company, how much of an edge would a friend or relative who also wanted the position have over other applicants?

JSEC Representatives

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33rd Annual Montana Economic Outlook Seminar

The New ICE Age: Investing in a Competitive, Educated, Workforce.

At the 33rd Annual Economic Outlook seminar, Sheila Stearns, the Montana Commissioner of Higher Education, will address work forces issues in Montana, and how the Montana University System will respond to Montana's dynamic work force situation. Montanans can find jobs, but employers often cannot find and keep the workers they need for good jobs. To sharpen our competitive edge in the world marketplace, Montana must connect the dots with a bright line between its education system, the private sector, and public policy. Bureau researchers and other experts will examine recent trends and the outlook for Montana's important industries: nonresident travel, health care, agriculture, manufacturing, and forest products. Program will feature Steve Holland, director of the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center and he will expand on Montana's work force issues based on his field work with Montana industries.

Locations:

Missoula ~ January 25, 2008

Kalispell ~ February 12, 2008; for other locations, cost and to register go to: www.bber.umt.edu

Upcoming Events:

33rd Annual MT Economic Outlook Seminar ~ www.bber.umt.edu

March 4th, 2008 ~ Job Fair, Sponsored by Salish & Kootenai College & Lake County JSEC

March 12th, 2008 ~ Polson High School Workplace Readiness Forum

May 7, 2008 ~ MT SHRM State Conference

October 7, 2008 ~ ABC Clinic

To keep current on Wage & Hour laws; new available resources, new employer information, upcoming Work Shops; previous Newsletters: visit our website: employlakecounty.com or call Todd Erickson, Business Resource Consultant @ 406.883.7885 email: toerickson@mt.gov Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00-2:30